1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ1

342 513 are made like tombs, surrounded by skins. These men are always naked, covered only with a buffalo robe. * * * * Their fort 251 is full of caves, in which are stored such articles as grain, food, 436 fat, dressed robes and bear skins. They are well supplied with these; it is the money of the country. The more they have of it 304 the richer they believe themselves to be. They are fond of tattooing, but never more than half of the body is tattoed, both of 285 men and women. They make wicker work very neatly, flat and in baskets.

Pottery. "They make use of earthen pots, which they use like 323 many other nations for cooking their food. They are for the most part great eaters; are eager for feasts. They brought me every 261 day more than twenty dishes of wheat, beans and pumpkins, all cooked. Mr. de la Marque, who did not hate feasts, went to them continually with my children. As I did not go to them my share 141 was sent to me. The men are stout and tall, generally very active, fairly good looking, with a good physiognomy. The women have not the Indian physiognomy. The men indulge in a sort of ball 526 play on the squares and ramparts.

000 "On the evening of the 4th the Sieur Nolant and my son arrived, well satisfied with their journey, having been well received and strongly urged to remain longer. The fort is on the bank of the river, as large again as this; the squares and streets are very fine and clean; their palisade is in the best order and strength; the whole built in the same fashion as the one in which we were. From what they could hear all their forts are alike; who saw one saw all, with this difference, that some were much larger than others. The nearest to the Pananas that the river appeared to go was, according to the compass, southwest by south, by signs given to them; the lower part may go to the sea to the southwest by west. They were often amused by broken talk; not being able to answer questions put to them, they answered something else, for want of understanding. The waters of their rivers come down with great rapidity, having many shoals. The water is not good for drinking, being brakish. We have constantly found from the last mountain almost all the marshes and ponds brakish or sulphurous. What they could understand was that on the lower part of the river there were men like us, who made cloth and linen, were very numerous and had wars with a large part of the Indians. We saw that it was useless to question them, as they

1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

of the caches or circular pits of the confederated village Mat- 251
thews speaks below. The writer found some of the remains of those caches on said site in 1905:

Caches, or Pits. "The numerous caches, or pits, for storing grain, are noteworthy objects in the village. In summer, when they are not in use, they are often left open, or are carelessly covered, and may entrap the unwary stroller. When these Indians have harvested their crops, and before they start on their winter's hunt, they dig their caches, or clear out those dug in previous years. A cache is a cellar, usually round, with a small opening above, barely large enough to allow a person to descend; when finished, it looks like an ordinary round cistern. Reserving a small portion of corn, dried squash, etc., for winter use, they deposit the remainder in these subterranean store houses, along with household utensils and other articles of value which they wish to leave behind. They then fill up the orifices with earth, which they trample down and rake over, thus obliterating every trace of excavation.

"Some caches are made under the floors of the houses, others outside, in various parts of the village grounds; in each case, the distance and direction from some door, post, bedstead, fire-place, or other object is noted, so that the stores may be found on the return of the owners in the spring. Should an enemy enter the village while it is temporarily deserted, the goods are safe from fire and theft. This method of secreting property has long been used among many tribes, has been adopted by whites living on the plains, and is referred to in the works of many travelers."

It is seen from the following account of the "medicine-lodge" 346
of the Mandans, as observed by Matthews, that he ascribes to it 361
a religious character, as did Catlin and others:

Mandan and Arricara "Medicine-Lodges." "There are, in the village, two open spaces, which, although of irregular shape, may be called squares; one of these is in the Mandan, the other in the Aricaree quarter. Besides each square stands a large round 'medicine-lodge,' or temple, built as described in the second paragraph of section three, which is used for purposes that, in a general way, are called religious."

The Ark—Ceremony of Okeepa. "In the center of the Mandan 778
square is a small circular palisade, about six feet high and four feet in diameter, made of neatly hewn puncheons set closely to-

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

a bunch of sage in her lodge and rubbed her body after returning from the fields to cleanse herself from the spirits in the gardens. Years ago, it is said that, when this was done, worms came out of the women's bodies. The Corn bundle-owner walked through the gardens several times during the summer, carrying the pipe and singing the Corn songs.

When the weather was too hot, too cold, or too dry, all those with Corn medicine rights met, and the Goose Women's Society joined them to dance and pray. While the ceremony was in progress, people of each household brought presents and offered them for relief from the adverse weather.

Many women pledged a ceremony to the Corn if good crops were sent by the gods. A person making such a vow, first prepared an elkhide robe and paid the Corn Priest to officiate. When the time appointed for the offering came and after the crop was harvested, she carried the robe to her field, where she tied it to a cottonwood pole and covered the pole with corn on the ear until the pile reached nearly to the robe. The young men of the tribe were invited to come and charge the robe, the first one there taking it. At a signal, the young men searched for the meat under the pile of corn. The Corn bundle-owner received four things for his part in the ceremony. Many different women gave this ceremony each fall when the crops were abundant.

The Corn bundle-owner officiated whenever corn was sold to people of other tribes. It was thought that [illegible] must be done or the spirits in the corn might leave the Mandan and he[illegible] people who took the corn away. He dressed in his ceremonial outfit an[illegible]ued back" the Corn Spirits.

Whenever a cache of stored corn was opened, four ears of corn were taken to the Corn bundle-owner as payment for his part in protecting the stored corn.

The order of Corn Priests is as follows:

1. Uses Head for Rattle
2. Brown
3. Pot
4. Bull Leg
5. Acting Foolish (OxinhEdE)
6. Foolish Man
7. Strong Arm
8. Raises Tail
9. Forearm Bone
10. Hunts His Enemy
11. Bull Standing on Land
12. WErukirihEri
13. Enemy
14. Sacred Cedar
15. Cedar Feather
16. Star
17. Head Comes Out
18. Water Bag
19. Coyote
20. Crow
21. WErukirihEri
22. Bloody Knife
23. Garden
24. Tree in Garden
25. Uses His Head for Rattle
26. HoxdEkE
27. Corn Grinder
28. Lying Down
29. Left-Hand Bull
30. Scabby
31. WErukirihEri
32. Crows Belt
33. Moves Slowly
34. Scattercorn
35. Mrs. Little Owl (present owner)

The many references to corn in the mythology express the significance of agriculture to this tribe. Archeological work in their prehistoric sites indicates that economically agriculture has played an important role in shaping the habits of these people. The primary factor in establishing villages at certain

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

Eagle-trapping expeditions were organized for a dual purpose, namely, the securing of feathers and of a winter's supply of meat and hides. Crows Heart thought that, taken year after year, the meat and hides secured had greater worth than the feathers. As he explained, it was not unusual to return without feathers, but game was always abundant once one reached territory not ordinarily hunted in. He remarked, on many occasions, that a village as a unit would never go to rough country on a summer hunt, as there would be few buffaloes there, and it would be difficult to surround them because of the uneven topography. There was the further danger of ambush. The rough lands were hunted over by small bands, chiefly eagle-trappers and war parties.

The appearance of ice on the edges of streams was the signal for the eagle-trapping expedition to return to the village. Before horses became numerous in the villages, it was customary to travel overland to the trapping sites, where bullboats were made of buffalo and elk hides for floating back the meat and hides to the village. In order not to be caught along the way by a sudden freezing of the river, it was imperative that trapping cease immediately with the first appearance of cold weather.

While in the trapping camp, the women received the meat and hides brought in by the men. The meat was cured on scaffolds, and the hides were dried or made into bullboats. Special effort was made to secure mountain sheep, as the badlands were the habitat of these prized animals, used for men's shirts and women's dresses, since their skins tanned softer than any other hide. Bears Arm, in explaining the importance of the meat and hides secured on these expeditions, stated that single women tried to marry young men so they could go along to help cure the meat and hides, knowing they might marry one so lucky as to kill a white buffalo.

Mandan tradition appears devoid of reference to recent division of a village population into small eagle-trapping bands during the winter. Such is not the case with the Hidatsa, however. In the Earthnaming ceremony of the Hidatsa there is reference in the myth to the division of the village into small bands camped along the Little Missouri River in eagle-trapping lodges during the winter. At least two of the clans, the Maxoxati and

3:Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
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353 Between every pair was a large post. An elevation showing some of the details is reproduced from Morgan in Figure 1, and a ground plan, in Figure 3.

● 251 171 The sedentary character of the Mandans and the fact that they practiced agriculture led to the development among them of several cultural features not found among the purely hunting tribes. In common with most sedentary tribes they made use of caches or storage pits. Henry[1] gives a description of them saying that, in the fall after harvest, the corn was dried, shelled and put in deep pits. These were about eight feet deep, with a mouth just wide enough for a person to get in, but the inside was hollowed out larger and the sides and bottom were lined with straw. The cache contained twenty to thirty bushels of beans or corn where it kept for several years. The caches were scattered everywhere about the village. Catlin mentions caches, saying that they placed corn in pits six or seven feet deep, jug shaped, and tightly closed at the top.

291 DRESS:—The dress of the Mandans in general was much like that of their neighbors, at the later period of their history at least. There were however some minor differences. Verendrye says that at his visit the men went naked, except for a carelessly worn buffalo robe—not even wearing a breech cloth. The women wore very little as a rule, their only article of attire being an apron about the waist, a hand's breadth wide and a foot long. But he adds later that some of them wore a gown of very soft deerskin. It is probable that other articles of dress were borrowed from their neighbors as time went on.

515 302 The men and women both began the day with a bath, after which the body was carefully oiled with castoreum. For any ceremonial or feast the body was also painted in colors, these being mixed with grease. After the bath the face and hair were nearly always whitened. The men in Maximilian's time usu-

291 ally wore a breech cloth, of black and white cloth, and moccasins with little or no ornamentation. The upper part of the body was usually naked as they seldom wore the leather shirt used in many other tribes. Even in the winter, Maximilian says they wore only the buffalo robe over the upper half of the

[1] Op. cit., vol. I, p. 360.

3:Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
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sunflowers. Many women and children were already employed in clearing and hoeing their plantations . . . . On each side were pleasant cultivated spots some of which stretched up the rising ground on our left, whilst on our right they ran nearly to the Missouri.''

The Mandans used to raise enormous quantities of produce from these crudely tilled plots, and the most of it was stored away in the caches. Each of these caches would hold from twenty to forty bushels of corn and beans, and the number of them was very large. Maximilian says that there was often from five hundred to eight hundred bushels of corn, alone, in the village. In view of his other statements this seems a very moderate estimate. The supply was large enough so that it was not only eaten by the people, but in the winter was sometimes fed to the horses.[1] Lewis and Clarke speak several times of buying corn of the Indians in lots of thirty bushels or more.

The methods of cultivation among the Mandans, though crude, were still above the most primitive types of tilling. The work in the fields was begun in May. Little trenches were made in rows, the grain was put in these and covered. During the summer the soil about the plants was dug up from three to four times. The harvest usually came in October and for that work every member of the village lent a hand, this being one of the few times when the men took any part in the domestic work. Between the rows of corn, rows of sunflowers were usually planted. The only noticeable feature in this description is the fact that the garden plots were cultivated and cared for during the summer, when most of the semi-agricultural tribes lower down the Missouri were absent on long hunting excursions.

The latitude of the Mandan villages required very hardy and quick-ripening vegetables; and we find that the Mandans had perfected a number of plants suited to the cold and dry climate of the region. The crops were often poor because of drought or early frost, but they never failed entirely.[2] The main products were corn, beans, squashes, sunflowers and tobacco. These were all grown when Verendrye visited them, and were

[1] Op. cit., p. 389. [2] Ibid., p. 347.

3:Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
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still grown at the time of Maximilian's visit. Corn, however, surpassed all the rest in importance. It was a small variety, five or six feet high, but was not the common, mottled "Squaw corn" found in the region later. Maximilian enumerates seven distinct sorts, as follows: — white, yellow, red, spotted, black, sugar, yellow flint, and red and white striped. The sweet corn was cut in the milk, then dried on the scaffolds in the sun and kept in the caches. The other corn was not gathered till it was ripe; it was then shelled and also put in the caches. Corn was eaten as succotash with beans, boiled as hominy, ground up into coarse flour and made into cakes, and also as a sort of gruel and in several mixtures with wild fruit.

The beans, as to the cultivation of which there is little information were, nevertheless, of considerable importance. Maximilian[1] gives a number of varieties of these also; there were white, black, red, and speckled beans. These were not gathered until ripe, and were then spread out on the flooring of the scaffolds to dry, after which they, too, were stored in the caches. The beans were used in about the same way as the corn, both of them being mixed in many dishes. There were five varieties of squash or pumpkin, yellow, black, striped, long, and thick skinned. These were usually cut up into thin slices, hung by cords from the scaffold rafters and dried in the sun. They, too, were then stored away for future use, to be boiled with beans and corn or separately, or eaten with some of the wild plums or choke-cherries.

The sunflowers, Maximilian says, seemed to differ little from those ordinarily cultivated in civilization. There were three kinds, red seed, black seed, and a small seeded sort. There is no account of the method of preparation, but Maximilian tells us that very good cakes were made from them. The Mandan tobacco, which was used also by the Hidatsa and Arikara, while belonging to the Nicotiana, was a small species. Verendrye says that the tobacco was put up in rolls, that they cut it green and used it, stalks and all; he said it was not good. Later authorities do not agree on its preparation, however, as both Maximilian and Henry say that it was cut ripe and ground up

[1] Op. cit., p. 292.

7: Catlin R. E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

262 264 415 *fat*; and one of the former held a fine brace of buffalo ribs, delightfully roasted; and the other was filled with a kind of paste or pudding, made of the flour of the "*pomme blanche*," as the French call it, a delicious turnip of the prairie, finely flavoured with the buffalo berries, which are collected in great quantities in this country, and used with divers dishes in cooking, as we in civilized countries use dried currants, which they very much resemble.

276 264 A handsome pipe and a tobacco-pouch made of the otter skin, filled with k'nick-k'neck (Indian tobacco), laid by the side of the feast; and when we were seated, mine host took up his pipe, and deliberately filled it; and instead of lighting it by the fire, which he could easily have done, he drew from his pouch his flint and steel, and raised a spark with which he kindled it. He drew a few strong whiffs through it, and presented the stem of it to my mouth, through which I drew a whiff or two while he held the stem in his hands. This done, he laid down the pipe, and drawing his knife from his belt, cut off a very small piece of the meat from the ribs, and pronouncing the words "Ho-pe-ne-chee wa-pa-shee" (meaning a *medicine* sacrifice), threw it into the fire.

He then (by signals) requested me to eat, and I commenced, after drawing out from my belt my knife (which it is supposed that every man in this country carries about him, for at an Indian feast a knife is never offered to a guest). Reader, be not astonished that I sat and ate my dinner *alone*, for such is the custom of this strange land. In all tribes in these western regions it is an invariable rule that a chief never eats with his guests invited to a feast; but while they eat, he sits by, at their service, and ready to wait upon them; deliberately charging and lighting the pipe which is to be passed around after the feast is over. Such was the case in the present instance, and while I was eating, Mah-to-toh-pa sat cross-legged before me, cleaning his pipe and preparing it for a cheerful smoke when I had finished my meal. For this ceremony I observed he was making unusual preparation, and I observed as I ate, that after he had taken enough of the k'nick-k'neck or bark of the red willow, from his pouch, he rolled out of it also a piece of the "*castor*," which it is customary amongst these folks to carry in their tobacco-sack to give it a flavour; and, shaving off a small quantity of it, mixed it with the bark, with which he charged his pipe. This done, he drew also from his sack a small parcel containing a fine powder, which was made of dried buffalo dung, a little of which he spread over the top, (according also to custom,) which was like tinder, having no other effect than that of lighting the pipe with ease and satisfaction. My appetite satiated, I straightened up, and with a whiff the pipe was lit, and we enjoyed together for a quarter of an hour the most delightful exchange of good feelings, amid clouds of smoke and pantomimic signs and gesticulations.

[576]

251 The dish of "pemican and marrow-fat," of which I spoke, was thus:—The first, an article of food used throughout this country, as familiarly as we use

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
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251 bread in the civilized world. It is made of buffalo meat dried very hard, and afterwards pounded in a large wooden mortar until it is made nearly as fine as sawdust, then packed in this dry state in bladders or sacks of skin, and is easily carried to any part of the world in good order. "Marrow-fat" is collected by the Indians from the buffalo bones which they break to pieces, yielding a prodigious quantity of marrow, which is boiled out and put into buffalo bladders which have been distended; and after it cools, becomes quite hard like tallow, and has the appearance, and very nearly the flavour, of the richest yellow butter. At a feast, chunks of this marrow-fat are cut off and placed in a tray or bowl, with the pemican, and eaten together; which we civilized folks in these regions consider a very good substitute for (and indeed we generally so denominate it) "bread and
415 butter." In this dish laid a spoon made of the buffalo's horn, which was black as jet, and beautifully polished; in one of the others there was another of still more ingenious and beautiful workmanship, made of the horn of the mountain-sheep, or "Gros corn," as the French trappers call them; it was large enough to hold of itself two or three pints, and was almost entirely transparent.

I spoke also of the earthen dishes or bowls in which these viands were served out; they are a familiar part of the culinary furniture of every Mandan lodge, and are manufactured by the women of this tribe in great quantities, and modelled into a thousand forms and tastes. They are made by the hands of the women, from a tough black clay, and baked in kilns which are made for the purpose, and are nearly equal in hardness to our own manufacture of pottery; though they have not yet got the art of glazing, which would be to them a most valuable secret. They make them so strong and serviceable, however, that they hang them over the fire as we do our iron pots, and boil their meat in them with perfect success. I have seen some few specimens of such manufacture, which have been dug up in Indian mounds and tombs in the southern and middle states, placed in our Eastern Museums and looked upon as a great wonder, when here this novelty is at once done away with, and the whole mystery; where women can be seen handling and using them by hundreds, and they can be seen every day in the summer also, moulding them into many fanciful forms, and passing them through the kiln where they are hardened.

576 Whilst sitting at this feast the wigwam was as silent as death, although we
595 were not alone in it. This chief, like most others, had a plurality of wives, and all of them (some six or seven) were seated around the sides of the lodge, upon robes or mats placed upon the ground, and not allowed to speak, though they were it readiness to obey his orders or commands, which were uniformly given by signs manual, and executed in the neatest and most silent manner.

431 When I arose to return, the pipe through which we had smoked was presented to me; and the robe on which I had sat, he gracefully raised by the corners and tendered it to me, explaining by signs that the paintings

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
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From the enslaved and degraded condition in which the women are held in the Indian country, the world would naturally think that theirs must be a community formed of incongruous and unharmonizing materials; and consequently destitute of the fine, reciprocal feelings and attachments which flow from the domestic relations in the civilized world; yet it would be untrue, and doing injustice to the Indians, to say that they were in the least behind us in conjugal, in filial, and in paternal affection. There is no trait in the human character which is more universal than the attachments which flow from these relations, and there is no part of the human species who have a stronger affection and a higher regard for them than the North American Indians.

There is no subject in the Indian character of more importance to be rightly understood than this, and none either that has furnished me more numerous instances and more striking proofs, of which I shall make use on a future occasion, when I shall say a vast deal more of marriage—of divorce—of polygamy—and of Indian domestic relations. For the present I am scribbling about the looks and usages of the Indians who are about me and under my eye; and I must not digress too much into general remarks, lest I lose sight of those who are near me, and the first to be heralded.

Such, then, are the Mandans—their women are beautiful and modest,—and amongst the respectable families, virtue is as highly cherished and as inapproachable, as in any society whatever; yet at the same time a chief may marry a dozen wives if he pleases, and so may a white man; and if either wishes to marry the most beautiful and modest girl in the tribe, she is valued only equal, perhaps, to two horses, a gun with powder and ball for a year, five or six pounds of beads, a couple of gallons of whiskey, and a handful of awls.

The girls of this tribe, like those of most of these north-western tribes, marry at the age of twelve or fourteen, and some at the age of eleven years; and their beauty, from this fact, as well as from the slavish life they lead, soon after marriage vanishes. Their occupations are almost continual, and they seem to go industriously at them, as if from choice or inclination, without a murmur.

The principal occupations of the women in this village, consist in procuring wood and water, in cooking, dressing robes and other skins, in drying meat and wild fruit, and raising corn (maize). The Mandans are somewhat of agriculturists, as they raise a great deal of corn and some pumpkins and squashes. This is all done by the women, who make their hoes of the shoulder-blade of the buffalo or the elk, and dig the ground over instead of ploughing it, which is consequently done with a vast deal of labour. They raise a very small sort of corn, the ears of which are not longer than a man's thumb. This variety is well adapted to their climate, as it ripens sooner than other varieties, which would not mature in so cold a latitude. The green corn season is one of great festivity with them, and one of much importance. The greater part of their crop is eaten during these festivals,

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
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251 and the remainder is gathered and dried on the cob, before it has ripened, and packed away in "*caches*" (as the French call them), holes dug in the ground, some six or sever feet deep, the insides of which are somewhat in the form of a jug, and tightly closed at the top. The corn, and even dried meat and pemican, are placed in these *caches*, being packed tight around the sides, with prairie grass, and effectually preserved through the severest winters.

251 Corn and dried meat are generally laid in in the fall, in sufficient quantities
262 to support them through the winter. These are the principal articles of food during that long and inclement season; and in addition to them, they oftentimes have in store great quantities of dried squashes and dried "*pommes blanches*," a kind of turnip which grows in great abundance in these regions, and of which I have before spoken. These are dried in great quantities, and pounded into a sort of meal, and cooked with the dried meat and corn. Great quantities also of wild fruit of different kinds are dried and laid away in store for the winter season, such as buffalo berries, service berries, strawberries, and wild plums.

252 The buffalo meat, however, is the great staple and "staff of life" in this
262 country, and seldom (if ever) fails to afford them an abundant and wholesome means of subsistence. There are, from a fair computation, something like 250,000 Indians in these western regions, who live almost exclusively on the flesh of these animals, through every part of the year. During the summer and fall months they use the meat fresh, and cook it in a great variety of ways, by roasting, broiling, boiling, stewing, smoking, &c.; and by boiling the ribs and joints with the marrow in them, make a delicious soup, which is universally used, and in vast quantities. The Mandans, I
264 find, have no regular or stated times for their meals, but generally eat about twice in the twenty-four hours. The pot is always boiling over the fire, and any one who is hungry (either of the household or from any other part of the village) has a right to order it taken off, and to fall to eating as he pleases. Such is an unvarying custom amongst the North American Indians, and I very much doubt, whether the civilized world have in their institutions any system which can properly be called more humane and charitable. Every
574 man, woman, or child in Indian communities is allowed to enter any one's lodge, and even that of the chief of the nation, and eat when they are hungry, provided misfortune or necessity has driven them to it. Even so can the poorest and most worthless drone of the nation; if he is too lazy to hunt or to supply himself, he can walk into any lodge and everyone will share with him as long as there is anything to eat. He, however, who thus begs when he is able to hunt, pays dear for his meat, for he is stigmatized with the disgraceful epithet of a poltroon and a beggar.

264 The Mandans, like all other tribes, sit at their meals cross-legged, or rather
516 with their ancles crossed in front of them, and both feet drawn close under their bodies; or, which is very often the case also, take their meals in a re-

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
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261 As I before observed, these men generally eat but twice a day, and many times not more than once, and those meals are light and simple compared with the meals that are swallowed in the civilized world; and by the very people also, who sit at the festive board three times a day, making a jest of the Indian for his eating, when they actually guzzle more liquids, besides their eating, than would fill the stomach of an Indian.

There are, however, many seasons and occasions in the year with all Indians, when they fast for several days in succession; and others where they can *get* nothing to eat; and at such times (their habits are such) they may be seen to commence with an enormous meal, and because they do so, it is an insufficient reason why we should for ever remain under so egregious an error with regard to a single custom of these people.

I have seen so many of these, and lived with them, and travelled with them, and oftentimes felt as if I should starve to death on an equal allowance, that I am fully convinced I am correct in saying that the North American Indians, taking them in the aggregate, even where they have an abundance to subsist on, eat less than any civilized population of equal numbers, that I have ever travelled amongst.

● 251 171 Their mode of curing and preserving the buffalo meat is somewhat curious, and in fact it is almost incredible also; for it is all cured or dried in the sun, without the aid of salt or smoke! The method of doing this is the same amongst all the tribes, from this to the Mexican Provinces, and is as follows:—The choicest parts of the flesh from the buffalo are cut out by the squaws, and carried home on their backs or on horses, and there cut "*across the grain*," in such a manner as will take alternately the layers of lean and fat; and having prepared it all in this way, in strips about half an inch in thickness, it is hung up by hundreds and thousands of pounds on poles resting on crotches, out of the reach of dogs or wolves, and exposed to the rays of the sun for several days, when it becomes so effectually dried, that it can be carried to any part of the world without damage. This seems almost an unaccountable thing, and the more so, as it is done in the hottest months of the year, and also in all the different latitudes of an Indian country.

So singular a fact as this can only be accounted for, I consider, on the ground of the extraordinary rarity and purity of the air which we meet with in these vast tracts of country, which are now properly denominated "the great buffalo plains," a series of exceedingly elevated plateaus of *steppes* or *prairies*, lying at and near the base of the Rocky Mountains.

263 It is a fact then, which I presume will be new to most of the world, that meat can be cured in the sun without the aid of smoke or salt; and it is a fact equally true and equally surprising also, that none of these tribes use salt in any way, although their country abounds in salt springs; and in many places, in the frequent walks of the Indian, the prairie may be seen, for miles together, covered with an incrustation of salt as white as the drifted snow.

10: Neill H-4(no date) 1884 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

and treasures, as it contains every thing he values most, viz: two bulls' heads, which seem to be their great Manitou and protection. They are well daubed over with earth, and particular care is taken of them. There is laid on, or rather hung up, his arms, shield, ammunition, scalps of his enemies, and every thing he most values. 353

MORTAR AND PESTLE.

Next to this stage, stand the mortar and pestle, fixed firm in the ground, and the remainder of the hut from that to the door is vacant during the daytime, but occupied during the night by the horses. Then there still remains a large space in the center, around the fire, for the use of the family, which is generally swept clean once a day. 342 412 231

CORN STAGE.

Fronting the entrance of each porch stands a stage raised about eight feet from the ground, twenty feet in length, and ten feet in breadth, for the purpose of hanging up their corn to dry, in the fall; these stages have a tolerable good flooring, which in the fall is covered with beans to dry, and posts are erected upon them, on the tops of which are laid poles or rafters, to which the corn and sliced squashes are suspended in tresses to dry. When their harvest is over, they must have a pretty effect, but at this season of the year they are lumbered up with different kinds of drift-wood, of which they make their fires, and it gives a very ugly appearance to the villages. 343 251 313 372

DRIFT WOOD.

This wood they collect, in the spring, when the ice breaks up, and when great quantities of this wood floats down, the natives being expert swimmers, and so very active, that there is scarcely a large tree escapes them, until they have a sufficient stock for the year. I observed lying opposite to each village, an immense pile of this wood, and some trees of an amazing size. Commonly, when they collect the drift wood there come down numbers of drowned buffalo, that have perished in attempting to cross above, at a season when the ice was bad. These animals the natives are very careful to haul on shore, as they prefer the flesh in that state. [222] [266]

LIGHT HAIRED CHILDREN.

An extraordinory sight that struck me among these people, was to see several children, of about ten years of age, whose hair was perfectly gray, and bore a strong resemblance to aged persons. Those I saw were all girls. These people in general have not that strong coarse hair, so peculiar to the natives of North America; it is of a much finer nature, rather inclining to 142

[See Category 16, p. 340.-N.]